NUMB. LXXVI.

The SPECTATOR.

Ut tu Fortunam, ſic nos te, Celſe, feremus. Hor.

Monday, May 28. 1711.

THERE is nothing ſo common, as to find a Man whom in the general Obſervation of his Carriage you take to be of an uniform Temper, ſubject to ſuch unaccountable Humour and Paſſion, that he is as much himſelf, and differs as much from the Man you firſt thought him, as any two diſtinct Perſons differ from each other. This proceeds from a Want of forming ſome Law of Life to our ſelves, or fixing ſome Notion of things in general, which may affect us in ſuch Manner, as to create Habits both in our Minds and Bodies. The Neglect of this, leaves us expoſed not only to an unbecoming Levity in our uſual Converſation, but often the ſame Inſtability in our Friendſhips, Intimacies and Alliances. A Man who is but a mere Obſerver of what paſſes around him, and not engaged in Commerces of any Conſideration, is but a bad Judge of the ſecret Motions of the Heart of Man, and by what Degrees it is actuated to make thoſe viſible Alterations in the ſame Perſon: But at preſent Time, when a Man is no way concerned in the Effect of ſuch Inconſiſtencies in the Behaviour of Part of the World, the Speculation muſt be in the higheſt Degree both diverting and inſtructive; and to enjoy ſuch Obſervations in the higheſt Reliſh, one ought to be placed in a Poſt of Direction, and have the dealing of their Fortunes to them. I have therefore been wonderfully diverted with ſome Pieces of ſecret Hiſtory, which an Antiquary, a very good Friend, lent me as a Curioſity. The Memoirs of the private Life of *Pharamond* [illegible] *Pharamond*, ſays my Author, was a Prince of infinite Humanity and Generoſity, and the ſame time the moſt pleaſant and facetious Companion of his Time. He had a peculiar Talent in him (which would have been unlucky in any Prince but himſelf,) he thought there could be no exquiſite Pleaſure in Converſation but among Equals; and would pleaſantly bewail himſelf that he always lived in a Crowd, but was the only Man in *France* that could never get into Company. This Turn of Mind made him delight in Midnight Rambles, attended only with one Perſon of his Bed-chamber: He would in theſe Excurſions get acquainted with Men (whoſe Temper he had a Mind to try) and recommend them privately to the particular Obſervation of his firſt Miniſter. He generally found himſelf neglected by his new Acquaintance aſſoon as they had Hopes of growing great; and uſed on ſuch Occaſions to remark, That it was a great Injuſtice to tax Princes of forgetting themſelves in their high Fortunes, when there were ſo few that could with Conſtancy bear the Favour of their very Creatures. My Author in theſe looſe Hints has one Paſſage that gives us a very lively Idea of the uncommon Genius of *Pharamond*. He met with one Man whom he had put to all the uſual Proofs he made of thoſe he had a Mind to know thoroughly, and found him for his Purpoſe: In Diſcourſe with him one Day, he gave him Opportunity of ſaying how much would ſatisfy all his Wiſhes. The Prince immediately revealed himſelf, doubled the Sum, and ſpoke to him in this Manner. "Sir, "*You have twice what you deſired, by the Favour of* "Pharamond; *but look to it that you are ſatisfied* "*with it, for 'tis the laſt you ſhall ever receive. I* "*from this Moment conſider you as mine; and to make* "*you truly ſo, I give you my royal Word you ſhall never* "*be greater or leſs than you are at preſent. Anſwer* "*me not*, (concluded the Prince ſmiling) *but enjoy* "*the Fortune I have put you in, which is above my own* "*Condition; for you have hereafter nothing to hope or* "*to fear.*

His Majeſty having thus well choſen and bought a Friend and Companion, he enjoyed alternately all the Pleaſures of an agreeable private Man and a great and powerful Monarch. He gave himſelf, with his Companion, the Name of the merry Tyrant; for he puniſhed his Courtiers for their Inſolence and Folly, nor by any Act of publick Diſfavour, but by humourouſly practiſing upon their Imaginations. If he obſerved a Man untractable to his Inferiours, he would find an Opportunity to

take

take some favourable Notice of him, and render him insupportable. He knew all his own Looks Words and Actions had their Interpretations; and his Friend Monsieur *Eucrate* (for so he was called) having a great Soul without Ambition, he could communicate all his Thoughts to him, and fear no artful Use would be made of that Freedom. It was no small Delight when they were in private, to reflect upon all which had passed in publick.

Pharamond would often, to satisfy a vain Fool of Power in his Country, talk to him in a full Court, and with one Whisper make him despise all his old Friends and Acquaintance. He was come to that Knowledge of Men by long Observation, that he would profess altering the whole Mass of Blood in some Tempers, by thrice speaking to them. As Fortune was in his Power, he gave himself constant Entertainment in managing the mere Followers of it with the Treatment they deserved. He would, by a skiful Cast of his Eye and half a Smile, make two Fellows who hated, embrace and fall upon each others Neck with as much Eagerness, as if they followed their real Inclinations, and intended to stifle one another. When he was in high good Humour, he would lay the Scene with *Eucrate*, and on a publick Night exercise the Passions of his whole Court. He was pleased to see an haughty Beauty watch the Looks of the Man she had long despised, from Observation of his being taken Notice of by *Pharamond*; and the Lover conceive higher Hopes, than to follow the Woman he was dying for the Day before. In a Court where Men speak Affection in the strongest Terms, and Dislike in the faintest, it was a comical Mixture of Incidents to see Disguises thrown aside in one Case and encreased on the other, according as Favour or Disgrace attended the respective Objects of Men's Approbation or Disesteem. *Pharamond* in his Mirth upon the Meanness of Mankind used to say, 'As 'he could take away a Man's Five Senses, he could 'give him an Hundred.' The Man in Disgrace shall immediately lose all his natural Endowments, and he that finds Favour have the Attributes of an Angel. He would carry it so far as to say, It should not be only so in the Opinion of the lower Part of his Court, but the Men themselves shall think thus meanly or greatly of themselves, as they are out or in the good Graces of a Court.

A Monarch who had Wit and Humour like *Pharamond*, must have Pleasures which no Man else can ever have Opportunity of enjoying. He gave Fortune to none but those whom he knew could receive it without Transport; he made a noble and generous Use of his Observations; and did not regard his Ministers as they were agreeable to himself, but as they were useful to his Kingdom: By this Means the King appeared in every Officer of State; and no Man had a Participation of of the Power, who had not a Similitude of the Virtue of *Pharamond*.

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